United Nations A/C.1/59/PV.22

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

First Committee
22nd meeting
Thursday, 4 November 2004, 9.30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. De Alba ..... (Mexico)

The meeting was called to order at 9.55 a.m.

Agenda items 57 to 72 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): This morning we will take action on draft resolutions listed in informal document 6. It is my intention then to adjourn the formal part of our meeting and proceed to an informal meeting to consider pending matters to which the informal document refers. These relate to the strategic framework considered by the Committee on Programme and Coordination, to the exercise initiated by the Chairman with respect to the programme of work for the sixtieth session, and to the streamlining of our agenda. We might also address, albeit briefly, the matter of reports.

I now invite the Committee to begin consideration of the draft resolution under thematic cluster 1 on nuclear weapons.

I shall now give the floor to those representatives wishing to make statements in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Issa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to explain Egypt's vote with respect to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.34 on the start of negotiations on an official international document on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Egypt's support for this draft resolution is based on our belief that a convention can be elaborated, and that such a convention will be an effective instrument for ensuring progress towards nuclear disarmament — hence our support for this draft resolution, and in particular for the outcome document published in 2000 following the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference. The document stated that such a convention should contribute significantly to nuclear disarmament, meaning that we should broaden its scope to include stockpiles of fissile material for the production of nuclear weapons.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.34, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

Ms. Stoute (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to

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establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Canada at the Committee's 11th meeting, on 19 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/59/L.34 and A/C.1/59/INF/2/Add.1*, Add.3*, Add.5 and Add.7. In addition, Bulgaria and Portugal have now become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34.

A recorded vote was requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Abstaining:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34 was adopted by 147 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Saudi Arabia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those representatives wishing to make statements in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Rivasseau (France) (*spoke in French*): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's vote on the draft resolution on the negotiation of a treaty to prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

By voting in favour of this resolution, France wishes once again to show its support for the launching of negotiations on a cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. We regret, however, that the text that was submitted this year, in a form identical to that of the resolutions traditionally adopted under this agenda item, does not take account of recent developments in this field. Questions have been raised with respect to the objectives that the international community should now set with a view to reaching a speedy conclusion of such a treaty, and these should be carefully considered.

In the past, similar draft resolutions have always been adopted by consensus. We regret that this year, the concerns expressed by a number of delegations on

the importance of avoiding division within the First Committee were not better taken into account.

Mr. Freeman (United Kingdom): It is with regret that the United Kingdom has felt the need to abstain on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34. As members will be aware, in previous years we have sponsored draft resolutions on this item.

The United Kingdom remains fully committed to a fissile material cut-off treaty. It also continues to support the effective verification of international arms control treaties. The negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty has long been an agreed priority of the international community, and we would like to see negotiations begin at the Conference on Disarmament in January.

We believe that the draft resolution, as currently worded, divides the international community at a time when consensus to move forward, and to do so as soon as possible, should be our prime objective.

Mr. Bar (Israel): I would like to give an explanation of Israel's abstention from the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34. Israel views the fissile material cut-off treaty in both regional and global contexts, and its policy is governed by the following two considerations.

First, in the regional context of the Middle East, issues related to nuclear disarmament can be dealt with only after achieving lasting relations of peace and reconciliation, and within the context of overall regional security and stability. Israel's approach to the way to move forward on these issues, inspired by the experience of other regions, is anchored in Israel's long-term vision, and was elaborated in our delegation's explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.8, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

Secondly, in the global context, recent developments highlight the fact that non-compliance of States with their international obligations and the misuse and unchecked dissemination of nuclear fuel cycle capabilities have become among the most pressing challenges in the nuclear non-proliferation field. A fissile material cut-off treaty would not address those challenges and could further complicate them. We therefore believe that overall priority in non-proliferation should be assigned to developing a new, effective non-proliferation arrangement pertaining to the nuclear fuel cycle.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34. However, we too are concerned at the fact that there was a need to put the draft resolution — previous versions of which have traditionally been adopted by consensus — to the vote. In that context, we would like to confirm the readiness of the Russian Federation to begin discussions on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for weapons, at the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, on the basis of a broad mandate.

Ms. Sanders (United States of America): The United States continues to support negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the further production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. A fissile material cut-off treaty would establish a legally binding barrier to the further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. It would contribute to nuclear arms reduction and nuclear non-proliferation goals. However, the United States has concluded that effective verification of such a treaty is not realistically achievable. Furthermore, attempts to negotiate a verification regime would delay the conclusion of that important treaty.

Since draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.34 calls for negotiations under a mandate calling for effective verification, the United States was obliged to vote in opposition to the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite the Committee to proceed to the consideration of the draft resolution under thematic cluster 7, "Disarmament machinery". As members are aware, draft resolutions A/C.1/59/L.1 and A/C.1/59/L.13 have been melded. On that item, the Committee will thus proceed to consider draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.60.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Committee to waive the 24-hour rule with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.60?

I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Lunces (United States of America): My delegation regrets that we are not in a position at this time to allow a waiver of the 24-hour rule. We therefore request that action be postponed until

tomorrow. I wish also to indicate that the United States has signed on as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.60.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I think the Committee will agree that there is no problem with having draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.60 be considered tomorrow morning.

The Committee will now consider the draft resolution under cluster 8, "Other disarmament measures". I call on the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1.

Ms. García Guerra (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for my delegation, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, Estonia, France, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and Ukraine, to introduce a draft resolution under agenda item 65 (c): "General and complete disarmament: disarmament and non-proliferation education".

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education", has two precedents. In the first, resolution 55/33 E adopted on 20 November 2000 without a vote, the General Assembly, desirous of stressing the urgency of promoting concerted international efforts at disarmament and non-proliferation and conscious of the need to combat the negative effects of the cultures of violence, requests that the Secretary-General prepare a study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

Two years later, on 22 November 2002, by resolution 57/60, also adopted without a vote, the General Assembly, reaffirming the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation and convinced that the need had never been greater for disarmament and non-proliferation education, especially on weapons of mass destruction, but also in the field of small arms and light weapons, terrorism and other challenges to international security, expressed its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the study contained in document A/57/124, and conveyed its recommendations for implementation, as appropriate, by Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the media.

Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/59/178 and Add.1) compiling input provided by Member States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations on activities undertaken in accordance with the study's recommendations.

I wish to note that alongside our consideration of the Secretary-General's report, submitted pursuant to the First Committee's resolutions, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1 carefully studied the report, which describes activities undertaken by some Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations. In that vein, it is our view that, in addition to the report that paragraph 3 of the draft resolution requests of the Secretary-General for the sixty-first session, it is also appropriate to encourage the Secretary-General to have the Department of Disarmament Affairs make maximum use of electronic means for disseminating all the information to be gathered on the implementation of the recommendations of the study on disarmament and non-proliferation education. That is the purpose of paragraph 4, regarding which an oral revision needs to be introduced to specify that that request to the Secretariat refers to the official languages of the United Nations. Paragraph 4 should therefore read as follows:

> "Also requests the Secretary-General to utilize electronic means to the fullest extent possible in the dissemination, in as many official languages as feasible, of information related to that report and any other information that the Department of Disarmament Affairs gathers on an ongoing basis in regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study."

On behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, I would note that the unanimous backing of the General Assembly will reflect the importance the international community attaches to promoting the implementation of the recommendations of the study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, as orally revised, entitled

"United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education".

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Ms. Stoute (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee is taking action on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, as orally revised by the representative of Mexico. The oral revision is to add the word "official" before the word "languages" in operative paragraph 4. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1 and A/C.1/59/INF/2/Add.3 and Add.4.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, as orally revised, have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt the draft resolution without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2, under cluster 10, "International security".

I call first on the representative of Albania, who wishes to make a general statement on the draft resolution.

Mr. Dilja (Albania): The draft resolution we are now considering in this cluster (A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2) concerns good-neighbourliness, stability and development in our region, South-Eastern Europe. With that good purpose in mind, Albania had the intention and the will to sponsor the draft resolution, despite some of our reservations. Unfortunately, this year, that could not be the case.

We deeply regret the whole process of the preparation and negotiation of the draft resolution, which was carried out by the delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Not a single consultation was held to bring together the parties most interested in this draft resolution, the countries of the region. This prevented us from being able to share and discuss our proposals in a timely fashion with our colleagues from neighbouring countries and other countries that sponsored the draft resolution. One of our proposals sought to amend the eleventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution by reformulating it or by deleting its final words — "in some parts of the region" — with the good intention of clarifying and improving it. There was no such reference in the corresponding resolution adopted two years ago, resolution 57/52, or, what is more, in a single one of the many documents adopted in the framework of the regional initiatives we have undertaken during this period. The phrase is also vague and unclear, raising doubts for each and every part of the region. What is more, it runs counter to the spirit of cooperation, the joint efforts and the positive achievements of our region in the area of controlling the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate once again my delegation's regret at the situation I have just explained and our hope that this will not be the case in the consideration of future draft resolutions on this subject.

Because of those reservations, Albania is not sponsoring the draft resolution, but will, nevertheless, join any consensus on it.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite the Committee to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2, entitled "Maintenance of international security — good neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe". I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Ms. Stoute (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2, entitled "Maintenance of international community security — good neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe". The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the Committee's 15th meeting, held on 22 October 2004. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2 and Addenda 1*, 2, 3, 5 and 7 to document A/C.1/59/INF/2. In addition, Andorra, Canada, Hungary, Iceland, Monaco and Switzerland have now become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my understanding that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2 have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to proceed accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.2 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have thus concluded our consideration of the draft resolution under cluster 10 before us today.

Other matters

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Issa (Egypt): During this session of the First Committee, the delegation of Egypt has asked whether it would be feasible to consider the amount of resources allocated to servicing the Conference on Disarmament. We have checked the United Nations budget, and the financial resources that are allocated every year to servicing the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva amount to approximately $3.7 million.

It is regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to agree on a programme of work for the past seven years, and it is even more regrettable, from our point of view, that the amount that is allocated every year is approximately four times as much as what is required to service the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and more than twice as much as what is required to service the First Committee. Both of those bodies have been working, and have been making a substantial contribution to the work of disarmament. We very much hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to agree on a programme of work. In the meantime, we trust that it will be one of our priorities to attempt to have that body meet substantively during the coming year.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I take this opportunity to confirm to the representative of Egypt that, as offered, I have contacted the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and that the Secretary of our Committee has been in touch with the Fifth Committee Secretary, in order to obtain detailed information concerning that subject. In the light of the statement just made by the representative of Egypt, it seems important to stress that all of us here want the Conference on Disarmament to get down to substantive work as soon as possible.

Regarding the budget, I would ask that we leave any consideration of that subject to the Fifth Committee. Of course, regarding the remarks by the representative of Egypt, it may be useful and relevant for members to become informed in detail through the appropriate channels at the appropriate time.

I propose that we now adjourn this formal meeting. This will provide the Department of Disarmament Affairs an opportunity to make a presentation, in an informal setting, with respect to the Chairperson-designate of the second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Immediately after that, we shall move along to informal consultations on all other pending issues.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.